## [CONFIDENTIAL.

### SELECTIONS

FROM THE

# VERNACULAR NEWSPAPERS

PUBLISHED IN THE PANJAB.

NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES,

OUDH, AND CENTRAL PROVINCES,

Received up to 27th April, 1878.

#### NATIVE STATES.

The Berár Samáchár of the 21st April says that every man, be he rich or poor, should always act in The Native States, accordance with the dictates of justice. According to the idea of natives every member of a family should act in accordance with the wishes of the head of the family; but the head of the family is free to act as be pleases. Similarly, the ruler of a State, being the master of his State, is at liberty to expend his treasures and treat his subjects as he pleases. But since the establishment of British rule in India this idea is undergoing a change. If the head of a family now were to ill-treat the members of his family, he would be seized by the village patel as a criminal. If a ruling chief now were to squander the State treasures, or oppress his subjects, he would be taken to task by the paramount power. If this idea had been prevalent in India from the first, India would have been in a far better state than she now is, and several

native States saved from destruction. But it is useless to lament the past. Some recent events have evoked the above remarks from us. The Raja of Puri has been convicted of murder, and sentenced to transportation for life by the Government of India. The Raja of Suket oppressed his people. Nearly five thousand of his subjects rose up in arms, invested the capital, and seized the minister. The Government of India enquired into the cause of this outbreak, and found the Raja incompetent to rule. He has been accordingly dethroned and removed to Lahore. The inhabitants of Bikaner have memorialised the Government of India praying for the annexation of Bikaner to British territories, on the ground that anarchy prevails at present in the State. The Raja sent some troops to collect the tax from the zamindars of Maheshwar. The soldiers entered the village and killed some zamindars and their wives. Altogether nine men were killed and fifteen wounded. Accordingly the people of the State have petitioned the Government of India to annex the State, and save them from the tyranny and oppression of the Raja. The Hindu Shastras inculcate that a raja should treat his subjects as his children. But do our native chiefs act upon this excellent principle? The misconduct of some native chiefs has already cost them their States. It is our earnest prayer that the remaining chiefs should take a warning from them.

Circulation, 130 copies. The Urds, Akhber (published in Marathi at Akola) of the 20th April, in its columns of extracts from newspapers, has the following notice of the Puri murder case:—The Puri murder case has been decided. The Baja, together with his servants who assisted in the crime, has been sentenced to transportation for life. Puri is not a large State, but still its Baja, owing to the sanctity of his character, is regarded by the Hindus as the incarnation of Misham It is indeed very bad that a high personage like the Raja of Puri bas been convicted of murder, and

sentenced to transportation for life. This sad event will be recorded in the history of India. We must find a consolation in the thought that the laws of nature (literally God) are inevitable.

The Lauh-i-Mahfuz of the 19th April, after referring to the dethronement of the Raja of Suket, says that there are some other native chiefs who deserve to be treated in the same way as the Raja of Suket. We will shortly publish a detailed account of their unworthy acts, and try to prove that they are incapable to rule over their States.

Circulation, 90 copies.

#### THE VERNACULAR PRESS ACT.

The Mirat-ul-Hind of the 15th April publishes an article communicated by one Muhammad The Vernacular Press Act. Murad Ali, a jagirdar of Daulatpur, and proprietor of the Chirag Rajistan Press, Ajmir, on the Vernacular Press Act. The substance of the article is as fellows :- Act IX of 1878 does not withdraw the privilege of liberty from respectable vernacular newspapers. It is only intended to check the license of scurrilous and seditious writers. Some men were in the habit of criticising the measures of the Government in a captious and hostile spirit. Their tone was sometimes really impertinent. We do not mean to say that Anglo-Indian journalists are exempt from the same faults. But on the contrary we are convinced that our native journalists will never attain the boldness of Anglo-Indian writers. At the feast given by Maharani Jamna Bai to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at Baroda such a large number of European officers were present that no seats were left for the correspondents of Anglo-Indian newspapers. The correspondents thought themselves insulted, and accordingly one of them composed a scurrilous poem and had it published in many Anglo-Indian papers. We are ashamed to mention that the writer of these scarrileus verses insinuated that

Circulation, 350 copies.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had fallen in love with Maharani Jamna Bai. If a native had indulged in such scurrility, one cannot say what punishment would have been inflicted upon him. Many other instances might be quoted to show that Anglo-Indian papers are far more in the habit of indulging in seditious and scurrilous writings than the vernacular papers. The English section of the Indian press is exempted from the operation of Act IX of 1878, on the ground that the papers published in English are read only by intelligent and educated men, whose minds cannot be affected by the objectionable matter that appears in them. But this is no sufficient excuse. Has the English language no influence over the mind of the reader? Will sedition, if preached in English, not infect the mind of the reader? English is now very extensively studied in India. Any thing seditious or obscene is sure to produce evil consequences, whether it be written in English or vernacular. Secondly, it is said that the proprietors of vernacular newspapers extort money from native chiefs. But this charge is not specially applicable to them alone. It should be observed that the ruling chiefs dread Anglo-Indian papers more than the vernacular papers, because they know that the former alone are read by high Government officers. Sometime ago a native chief happened to incur the displeasure of the correspondent of an Anglo-Indian paper. The correspondent published scores of articles in the paper condemning the chief as incompetent to rule, and advising the Government to take the administration of the State into its own hands. Of course his writings had no effect on our Government. native chief was alarmed, and had to appeare the anger of the correspondent some how or other. A great native banker, on the occasion of a marriage in his family, gave a feast to the European officers of the district, but forgot to invite the correspondent of an Anglo-Indian paper to the feast. The result of this was that decens of Anglo-Indian papers wrote

in condemnation of the marriage and the feast. When the matter came to the knowledge of the banker, he at once gratified the correspondent, and the same marriage and feast were then praised by Anglo-Indian papers. There is no doubt that the editors and correspondents of some Anglo-Indian papers extort money from the ruling chiefs, and the native nobility and gentry: call that extortion, reward, or by whatever other mild name you please. It is therefore very distressing to see an invidious distinction made by the Government between the vernacular and the Anglo-Indian papers. There was no need of a special legislation for the repression of seditious writings. The existing law was sufficient to deal with this offence. Sedition and scurrility should not be tolerated in any newspaper, whether it be published in English or in any vernacular language. We assure the respectable members of the vernacular press that Act IX of 1878 does not affect any whose object is to promote union between the rulers and the ruled, to expound the views of the Government to the people, and to represent upon the Government the opinion and feeling, the wants and wishes, of the people. The Act is only intended to stop the mouths of those writers who were accustomed to abuse the native chiefs and the Government through malice or enmity.

The Urdu Akhbár (published in Marathi at Akola) of the

The Sahachar a vernacular newspaper of Calcutta, stopped under the provisions of Act IX of 1878. 20th April says that it is now a matter of uncertainty how long a vernacular newspaper will continue to exist. The district officer may at any time stop a

vernacular newspaper under the provisions of Act IX of 1878. Sometime ago the police commissioner of Calcutta asked the editor of the Sahachar, a vernacular newspaper of Calcutta, to furnish a security for Rs. 500 under the provisions of Act IX of 1878. In reply to this, the editor of the Sahachar informed the police commissioner that his paper never published anything against the Government, and that it was read by

Circulation, 130 copies. educated natives. But the police commissioner insisted on the security being furnished, and therefore the editor stopped the paper. Men will be able to see from this what oppressions the district officers will commit in enforcing the Vernacular Press Act.

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The Vernacular Press municated by a correspondent, states that the writings of a few ill-educated, inexperinced, and unworthy members of the vernacular press have led to the enactment of Act IX of 1878. Those proprietors of vernacular newspapers, who have this class of men as editors of their papers, should dispense with their services, and substitute a better class of men in their places.

Circulation, 175 copies.

The Vrita Dhárá of the 22nd April says that the Vernacular Press Act has been expressly The Vernacular Press Act. enacted to check the publication of such writings as are calculated to cause disaffection or to increase race antagonism. The Act does not prohibit any men from criticising public measures, or from discussing any questions, connected with commerce, trade, education, &c. It is intended to stop the mouths of those unwise journalists who were in the habit of grossly exaggerating facts, and those who, although they knew that the natives being a subject race, could not have the same rights and privileges as Englishmen, preferred to believe in the apparent equality between the two races in the matter of rights and privileges, and indulged in strong language in demanding for the natives their full rights and privileges. In other words, the Act requires that native editors should perform their duties with more care and caution, and will therefore tend to improve their ability. Thus it is intended to enhance and not lower their dignity. But there is no doubt that native editors will have to encounter one serious difficulty: Act IX of 1878 places them entirely under the control of district magistrates and police commissioners; and therefore they will no longer

be able to express their thoughts freely. We hope that, when fears of war in Europe are removed, the Vertizcular Press Act will be abolished. If the magistrates and police commissioners deal fairly and justly with native editors, the latter will not find it difficult to conduct their papers. But there is little hope that powerful magistrates will act with moderation. However, we trust that when any difficulties arise in the working of the Act, the Government of India will not be slow to make necessary amendments in it.

The Akhbar-i-Alam of the 20th April publishes an Urdu Circulation, translation of Act IX of 1878, and The Vernacular Press makes the following remarks on the gagging of the vernacular press:-After a great discussion in the House of Commons on the question of the liberty of the Indian press, the Indian press was made free in 1835. In 1857, after the outbreak of the mutiny, the question of the liberty of the press again engaged the attention of the Government of India, and Act X was passed to gag the whole Indian press. The press strongly protested against the Act. and it was accordingly soon abolished. Now Act IX of 1878 has been enacted which applies only to the vernacular press. This measure is inconsistent with the impartiality of the Government, and is calculated to shake the confidence of the people in the Government. The natives alone are prevented from reaping a profit from journalism. If the privilege of liberty had been withdrawn from the English section of the Indian press along with the native section, there would have been some hope of our liberty being restored to us. English members of the Indian press could take the matter to Parliament with some hope of success. But the Government has gagged only the vernacular press. How can the Government now call itself impartial? The establishment of the censership of the vernacular press has placed it beyond the shadow of a doubt at the present critical time that the Government does not rely upon the loyalty of its natives

90 copies.

subjects. This show of distrust, on the part of the Government towards the people, far from producing any beneficial consequences, is calculated to destroy that good impression which English justice has already made on their minds. Were the writings of the vernacular press more dangerous or mischievous than those of the Anglo-Indian press? Did the ignorant masses ever put faith in the writings of newspapers? Had such been the case, the vernacular newspapers would never have been subjected to such disgrace as they are at present, and the masses would be ready to sacrifice their lives on behalf of the vernacular newspapers. native nobility and gentry used to purchase vernacular newspapers for the mere name of the thing. They never took the trouble of ever opening the papers. Their domestic servants threw the papers in their bathrooms or kitchens. The general public purchased vernacular newspapers in order to use them as wastepaper. Only a limited number of natives, who had received education at Government schools, used to read the papers. The formal withdrawal of the privilege of liberty from the vernacular press had made the people understand that the vernacular press was hitherto really free. long been the general belief of the ignorant classes of natives that the Government does not admit them to the secrets of the State, and does not regard them as its friends. Act IX of 1878 has, in their opinion, confirmed this belief. put an end to external friendship with the people, and to have acted in a way which is calculated to excite secret enmity in their minds, is much worse than the former state of things, when they occasionally indulged in strong language, and regarded the indifference of the Government at their unrestrained writings as their privilege of liberty. In that case the Government had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with their views and feelings, and they thought that the Government was disposed to please and favour them. To stop the mouth of any man by force is to sow the seeds of disaffection and enmity in his mind.

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It is therefore our opinion that Act IX of 1878 should not be enforced. The Indian Penal Code is sufficient to deal with the offending journalists. If Act IX of 1878 is not abolished, the Government itself will see what good will accrue from that Act. If the Government will look dispassionately at the matter, it will perceive that the state and the public derive many advantages from the writings of the vernacular press, and will be pleased to abolish the Vernacular Press Act.

The Safir-i-Hind, Amritsar, of the 20th April, says that

The Vernacular Press there is no doubt that some vernacular newspapers published seditious articles.

Circulation, 200 copies.

Act. It was not only advisable to enact a law like the Vernacular Press Act to repress sedition, but it would not have been improper if some chastisement had been inflicted upon such seditious writers. It must be also admitted that some vernacular newspapers used to publish abusive articles against the native chiefs and Government officers. But the respectable newspapers never wrote any thing regarding their private affairs, but only criticised their public conduct. It should be expressly stated in the Vernacular Press Act that no newspaper should discuss the private conduct of native chiefs and Government officers, but criticise their dealings only with the people. Suppose a native chief really oppresses his subjects; a newspaper, which is responsible for all its statements, exposes his oppressions. Seeing that the inhabitants of native States think themselves to be the subjects of Her Majesty, will the Government derive any benefit by hiding his oppressions from public view? But, to our thinking, an attempt on the part of the Government to conceal his oppressions may lead to dangerous consequences. Moreover, the toleration of oppression will be attended with ignominy to the Government. Suppose an English officer is in the habit of abusing the people, and thus undoes the goodwork which the gentle and polite conduct of high Government officers is doing. Does not a verna-

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cular newspaper render an important service to the Government by bringing the misconduct of that officer to the notice of the Government? If a native judge dishonestly sucks the blood of the people, his oppression cannot induce them to be favourably disposed towards the Government. If the vernacular newspapers are prohibited from complaining against him, can any good be expected to accrue from this prohibition? The honest native editors sincerely love the English Government. They are heartily bent on promoting the welfare of the native population, which is the wish or rather the interest of the Government itself. In the end we beg to state that those proprietors of vernacular newspapers whom some local Governments have exempted from a variety\* of troubles should be heartily thankful to the Government. None but the wicked and incendiaries will find fault with the good intentions and kindness of the Government towards the people. There is no doubt that the British rule in India is a perfect God send.

Circulation, 300 copies.

The working of the lar newspapers have begun to be stop-vernacular Press Act. ped under the operation of Act IX of 1878. The Samáchár of Calcutta has ceased to exist. Perhaps many other newspapers will shortly be stopped. None but those newspapers which indulge in unrestrained license, and bear an open attitude of hostility towards the Government, should be stopped, otherwise Act IX of 1878 will be long memorable in the annals of British India. We hope that district officers will enforce the Act with great leniency and discretion, and try to keep up the vernacular papers of their several districts.

Perhaps the writer means that the proprietors of some vernacular newspapers have been exempted from the provisions of Act IX of 1878 by local Governments.

The Safir-i-Budhana of the 17th April strongly protests The Vernacular Press against the Vernacular Press Act. The Act will be productive of a variety The vernacular press being gagged, popular comof evils. plaints will now hardly reach the ears of the Government. The Government will have no means of ascertaining the views and feelings of the people. The vernacular papers used to correct those false notions which spread among the people, and which were calculated to be attended with dangerous con-This will no longer be possible for them, because, as they have incurred the displeasure of the Government, the people will no longer put faith in them. Many useful articles, calculated to further the cause of commerce, trade, civilisation, and education among the natives, also used to appear in vernacular newspapers. The vernacular papers exercised a wholesome check over native chiefs and prevented them from committing any unworthy acts. But now they will act as they please. The unjust, oppressive, and illegal acts of Government officers will now no longer be exposed. The editors of vernacular newspapers are placed absolutely. at the mercy of district officers by Act IX of 1878. Now the latter, out of malice and grudge, will harass and vex the former in a variety of ways. The native editors should be very careful in their writings, otherwise they will be put in jail, and their printing stones, type, &c., will be forfeited to The writer then refers to the fact that the Government. British Indian Association of Calcutta is going to send a protest to Parliament against Act IX of 1878, and asks the editors of vernacular newspapers to correspond with the secretary of the Association on the subject. The writer says that

the members of Parliament are lovers of justice and friends of

liberty, and hopes that Act IX of 1878 will be repealed by

Parliament just as Act X of 1857 was. The writer also pub-

lishes an Urdu translation of a letter which he has received

from the secretary of the British Indian Association. The

Circulation, 500 copies.

secretary has called for certain back numbers of the Sufir-i-Budhana from which extracts were taken in the weekly Selections, and which extracts were probably submitted before the Legislative Council on the 14th March, 1878.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Circulation, 200 copies.

The Safir-i-Hind of the 20th April hopes that the new Secretary of State for India will exer-The over activity of the Indian Legislature. cise a check over the over-activity of the Indian Legislature, and see that no new laws, which are not absolutely necessary, are enacted.

Circulation, 150 copies.

The order of the High Court, North-Western Provinces, that the examination of the district court pleaders will be held in English from the year

1680.

The Nasim-i-Agra of the 10th April (received on the 22nd April) strongly protests against the order of the High Court, North-Western Provinces, ruling that the examination of the district court pleaders will be conducted in English from the year 1880. The following is the sub-

stance of the writer's remarks; -- How unfortunate India is The evil stars now rule her destiny, She has at present. been already exposed to three calamities, viz., famine, the license-tax, and the destruction of the independence of the vernacular press. Now the Urdu language is threatened with destruction by the High Court of the North-Western Provinces. And nothing but the timely intervention of the Supreme Government can save it from destruction. The High Court of these provinces has ruled that from the year 1880 the examination of the district court pleaders will be conducted in English and not in Urdu. We fail to see what good results this change will produce. We are also unable to understand what motives have induced the High Court to introduce this change. It may be reasonably presumed that the High Court of these provinces has, in introducing this change, only followed the example of the Calcutta High Court, or has in view the encouragement of the English

language. It is perhaps also the belief of the Allahabad High Court that justice will be better administered at district courts, and all legal points more fully disquesed by having English educated pleaders. But it should be observed that the Allahahad High Court is not in the same advanced state as the Calcutta High Court. The former has no original jurisdiction. There are no attorneys, attached to it. The number of judges attached to the Allahabad High, Court is also less than that of the Calcutta High Court. The progress of English education in these provinces is quite insignificant: compared to what it is in Bengal. If it is the object of the Allahabad High Court to encourage the use of the English language in these provinces, it should have adopted the more simple and less objectionable course for accomplishing this The first thing that ought to have been done to accomplish this object is that English should have been encouraged and Urdu discouraged at our colleges and schools. If it is the wish of the High Court that English alone should be the court language, the use of Urdu should be graduallydiscouraged. At present very few subordinate judges, munsiffs, and deputy collectors in these provinces know English. It is not advisable to hold the district court pleaders' examination in English alone, until all courts are presided over by English knowing judges, and the use of English becomes widespread among the inhabitants of these provinces.

#### EDUCATION.

The Koh-i-Núr, Lahore, of the 20th April, in reference to the late entrance and high proficiency. 540 copies. The late entrance and high proficiency examinaexaminations of the Panjab University, tions of the Panjah Uniwhich commenced on the 15th idem. complains that questions were dictated to the candidates in the examination-room. It is needless to enumerate the manifold difficulties with which the system of dictating questions to a large number of examinees is necessarily attended. If the

Panjab University is unable to make satisfactory arrangements for the printing of questions, it should have asked the director of public instruction for aid in the matter. A large part of the examinee's time is spent in writing the questions, and therefore the examinees are examined only in one subject in one day. At this rate the examinations will be finished in three weeks. Hence it is easy to conceive the amount of trouble and inconvenience which those poor examinees who have come from the mufassil will have to experience by being detained at Lahore for so long a period of time. On the first day of the examination the registrar of the university struck a respectable examinee with his open hand.

#### LOCAL AND MISCELLANEOUS.

A correspondent of the Berár Samáchár of the 21st April says that famine is now always lurk-Famines in India. ing in one corner or another of India. But as there is no check over the exportation of grain from any part of the country for the famine-stricken districts, the effects of famine also extend to those parts of the country where there has been a good outturn of crop. As, far instance, Berar is not liable to frequent visitations. But as famines are frequent in other parts of India, and grain is exported in large quantities from Berar, famine prices also prevail in this province. When there is famine in any part of the country, the Government should exercise some check over the exportation of grain from the other parts of the country, and make some other arrangements for the supply of grain to the suffering districts.

In India agriculture is the employment of the bulk of the population; and, therefore, whenever there is a failure of rains, or the rainfall is insufficient or untimely—and such freaks of nature are not unfrequent—the bulk of the Indian population is thrown out of employ, and starvation stares them in the face. The natives should encourage manufactures in India,

so that the slightest freak of nature may not prove fatal to large portions of the population.

A correspondent of the Urdu Akhbar (published in Marathi
The prevalence of theft at Akola) of the 20th April, writing from Waregaon, complains of the prevalence of theft at Waregaon. The inhabitants of the village should be on the alert. Perhaps the police do not keep a strict watch at night.

Circulation, 130 copies.

The Nasim-i-Agra, a newly started paper, of the 20th

April, exhorts the natives to encourage commerce and the industrial arts progress.

Which are the only means of increas-

Circulation, 150 copies.

progress. which are the only means of increasing the wealth of a country. India is very rich in natural The natives were once remarkable for progress in science and art above all other nations of the world. now they stand far behind other nations in mental and material progress. Although we have now the best opportunities for making improvements, our laziness, want of enterprise, and want of unity prevent us from making any progress. Uninterrupted peace reigns throughout the country which is most favourable to commerce. For the encouragement of arts and industries the Government holds frequent exhibitions and awards prizes. It is difficult to give an account of the efforts which the Government is making for our education. While the Government is doing all it can to push us forward, we are doing our best to retrograde. Some of our countrymen urge that the whole native population is hard beset with poverty, and that no man who earns a bare livelihood with difficulty can be expected to make any progress in science or art. But, to our thinking, such notions find favour only with the weak and the timid. National union overcomes all difficulties. If we set about improving our condition with patience and perseverence and assist each other in our efforts, our efforts will surely be crowned with success.

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"Hasht-nagar," says that there is a "Hasht-nagar," says that there is a the need of a bridge nala called Dab, near mauza Utmanda is flooded all traffic across it is stopped. Newspapers have several times urged the need of constructing a bridge over it. Sometime ago the members of the (municipal) committee also recommended the construction of a bridge over it, but the officers disregarded their proposal. On the 4th April the nada was flooded and two men were drowned. European officers and men of the canal department have frequent occasion to go across it. A bridge should, therefore, be constructed over it.

Circulation,

A correspondent of the Oudh Akhbár of the 23rd April Measures for the relief suggests that a quantity of grain which of famine. may be sufficient for local consumption for one year should be kept in store in every town and village. The store of grain should be placed in charge of the village zamindars and lambardars under the supervision of the tahsildar. It should be looked upon as the common property of the whole village. Whenever there is a famine the village granary should be opened and grain should be sold to the village inhabitants at the rate of not less than sixteen seers the rupee, and local relief works should be started in each village to provide labour for the poor classes.

[The Ner-ul-Anwar, Cawnpore, of the 27th April, publishes an article in its correspondence columns in which the writer warms the people that quyamut or the last day of the world appears to be near at hand, and asks them to repent for their sins. The signs indicative of the near approach of quyamat are visible on every side. Dishonesty, fraud, deceit, theft, false-head, perjuty, impiety, warfare, &c., prevail throughout the world. The rains fail. There is no unity among the Musalmans. Corruption and bribery prevail among the officers.

Kings are bent on amassing riches. As a sign of God's wrath there was a heavy shower of hail on the 29th March last in mauzas Chanoti and Dhármáng in Chittagong. There is a valley between the two mauzas. It was entirely covered with hail. The writer was present on the spot. Muny hailstones were very large, each of them being 21 feet in length, and nearly 4 feet in breadth.

There is also a pepper tree in mauza Gatádiyán, in the Chittagong district, which bears some mangoes.]

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The 4th May, 1878.

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